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THE WORTH OF HUMAN LIFE

A SERIES of six articles on capital punishment appeared recently in the *New York Herald Tribune* (July 20-26), in which the writer, B. J. Cutler, manages to assemble certain facts and views which at least contribute novelty to this often debated subject. There is the usual comparison of opinions as to whether or not fear of execution acts as a deterrent on cold-blooded murderers, with, oddly enough, famous defense lawyers such as Samuel S. Leibowitz insisting that it does. Cutler maintains that the most impressive charge against capital punishment is the claim that it discriminates against the poor and members of minority groups. Last year, for example, there was a total of sixty-two executions in the United States—fifty-one for murder, seven for rape, two for espionage, and two for kidnaping. Of those executed, thirty were white, thirty-one Negro, and one was an American Indian.

The long-term racial picture on capital punishment in the United States is given briefly by Cutler:

Since 1930 the national execution toll has claimed the lives of 1,479 whites, 1,763 Negroes, and thirty-nine members of other races. Of the total, 45.1 per cent were white, 53.7 Negro, and 1.2 per cent other....

Commenting on the execution figures by race, Prof. Frank E. Hartung, of Wayne University, said, "Considering their proportion in the total population, this means that Negroes are over-represented by about 550 per cent."

Some criminologists point out that Negroes have a higher homicide rate than the population as a whole. But there are few who suggest that the Negro homicide rate is so high that it should result in a 550 per cent over-representation of the race in death houses.

One explanation of the disproportionate number of Negroes executed is found in the figures on punishment for rape in the Southern states. In one period six Southern states and the District of Columbia took the lives of seventy-eight Negroes for the crime of rape. While hundreds of white men were convicted for rape during the same period, not one was executed.

Cutler quotes Warden Lawes' book, *Twenty Thousand Years in Sing Sing*:

... I have escorted 150 men and one woman to the death chamber and the electric chair. In ages they ranged from seventeen to sixty-three. They came from all kinds of homes and environments. In one respect they were all alike. All were poor and most of them friendless.

Clarence Darrow, a man famous for effective defense in murder cases, said much the same thing: "There is nothing so unequal and unfair as capital punishment. Only the poor are put to death."

Some years ago, a House Congressional Committee reported on a bill which, had it passed, would have ended the death penalty in the District of Columbia:

As it is now applied, the death penalty is nothing but an arbitrary discrimination against an occasional victim. It cannot even be said that it is reserved as a weapon of retributive justice for the most atrocious criminals. For it is not necessarily the most guilty who suffer it. Almost any criminal with wealth can escape it, but the poor and friendless convict, without means or power to fight his case from court to court or to exert pressure on the pardoning executive, is the one singled out as a sacrifice to what is little more than a tradition.

By means of such quotations, and with shrewd summarizing remarks of his own, Cutler builds a powerful case against capital punishment. It seems evident that if justice must involve equality before the law, then the simple fact that many persons escape the extreme penalty is enough to make all executions unjust.

There are other considerations, however, not touched upon in the newspaper series. Despite the morbid interest in such things, most people feel a terrible revulsion against the impersonal processes of execution. It is not simply that a man loses his life. Men risk their lives every day, for good or bad reasons. It is the *absolute impotence* of the condemned man. The thing that outrages the inner feelings of human beings most of all is having to witness something *done to others*. When every last vestige of the power of choice is taken away from a man, he remains subjectively a choosing or moral being, yet this aspect of him is completely ignored by the penalty of capital punishment. This is not a question of what he "deserves," but of the fact that the purpose of human life is frustrated.

An analysis of this sort ought not to be confused with sentimentality over what happens to those whom we classify as "hardened criminals." Capital punishment could be abolished without the slightest concession to sentimentality. Actually, it could be argued that the taking of life by the state is more degrading to society than to the condemned individual—that it is the ultimate devaluation of human kind. It is even conceivable that the community which resolved to show an inviolable respect for life—for even the life of a man who has used his freedom in calculated and destructive violence—would establish an example that would eventually reduce crimes of violence. The taking of life, surely, can never be regarded as an unpardonable offense in a society which itself takes life.

One of the familiar arguments in behalf of capital punishment was stated by Judge Leibowitz (the famous trial



THE ARTS OF PEACE

THE "things are bad all over" mood which clouds the atmosphere of practically all levels of serious thinking has at least one kind of silver lining which it is easy to overlook. It is that part of the feeling of depression comes from the fact that the conscience of the world is more sensitive than ever before, the scope of moral responsibility felt by men of broad culture largely increased. While there is still the apathy of the great majority, those who attempt to think in terms of human welfare no longer stop with national or continental boundaries. In time, such habits of thought should create what will amount to a new convention of the humanitarian spirit.

Simply because they are not exceptional, but represent rather typical comments by contemporary reviewers, the following observations of David Heaps (*July Progressive*) in connection with books on the Point 4 Program and the problems of undeveloped countries are of special interest:

This country is in the bizarre position of inhabiting, almost alone, an incredibly affluent island surrounded by a vast world slum. Translated into unemotional mathematical terms, this means that about two thirds of the world's population live in the underdeveloped countries of Asia, Africa, and a major portion of Latin America.

About one half of all the peoples of the world, during their limited life-span, eke out a precarious existence on an average per capita income of less than \$100 a year. In the United States, the average annual income of every inhabitant is more than \$1,500. Our six per cent of the world's population possesses some 40 per cent of the world's total income. And the incontrovertible fact is that the few rich of the world

lawyer was elected to Kings County Court, New York, in 1940), with the suggestion that "it is unfair to the community to expect it to maintain the criminal in prison for the rest of his life at an average cost of \$1,400 a year." This argument assumes that the sole alternative to capital punishment is life imprisonment. But today, the whole question of imprisonment for crime is up for discussion and reconsideration. If prisons themselves are failures, so far as their avowed objectives—the protection of society and the "rehabilitation" of lawbreakers—are concerned, then why should it be assumed that the convicted murderer must either be executed or put away for life?

The obvious retort is, What would you do—turn him loose? This is an unimaginative point of view. It is very like the point of view which caused juries in New York to turn loose criminals because of the severity of the laws of that state. Mr. Cutler supplies interesting information on the workings of the New York law:

This state [New York] and Vermont are the only two that make death the mandatory penalty upon conviction of first degree murder. In Vermont, however, the law is rarely enforced and only four persons have been executed in this century.

In New York the law bars juries from bringing in a guilty verdict "with mercy" which would mean a sentence of life imprisonment. It also denies discretion to judges who, after a guilty verdict in a murder case, have no choice but to pass the sentence of death.

At one time or another, most of the other states in the
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are today getting richer, while the innumerable poor are getting poorer.

The American reader who notes such facts is likely to feel a little puzzled. For most Americans, despite their relatively large incomes, are haunted by insecurities and fears of an economic slump which could quickly wipe out the small savings they have accumulated. And if Americans, with fifteen times the income of half of the people in the world, are not free from the specter of deprivation, how are economic problems ever to be solved at all?

Perhaps it is time for an entirely new sort of thinking about economic problems. It is hard to say what the stimulus to this thinking should be, but there can be no doubt about its quality. In a book about Oscar Geiger, the founder of the Henry George School of Social Science, the author, Robert Clancy, describes Geiger's reaction to his first reading of George's classic, *Progress and Poverty*. A physician friend, a follower of George, had lent the book to Geiger. He started reading the same night and found George's words so engrossing that he didn't stop until he had finished it—at daybreak. Geiger hurried to the home of his doctor friend and rang the door bell. When the doctor peered sleepily out of the window, Geiger shouted: "What are we going to do about it?"

"Do about what?" cried the exasperated doctor.

"The book, of course! What are we going to do about it?"

"You've read the book already?"

"Of course!"

"Come in, my boy, and have breakfast with me!"

There were a lot of facts in George's book, facts which, as presented by the great humanitarian thinker, stirred Geiger to begin a long career of action in behalf of economic justice. But there were no facts like the following:

The West spends more on arms than Asia has for everything. Arms bill of the NATO countries for 1953 is 63½ billion, which exceeds the total income of all the people of Asia (in 1949, latest available figures) by \$13½ billion. (*July Fellowship*.)

"What," we faintly echo, "are we going to do about it?"

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We have long noticed that naturalists and nature-lovers, when they turn to philosophy, generally turn out to be idealists with a deep, intuitive grasp of the need for constructive synthesis and affirmation. The same thing seems to be true of philosophers who love their fellow men. We have in mind Morris Cohen, who devoted much of his life to helping the underprivileged youth of New York's East Side to gain an education. A *Christian Century* reviewer recently found occasion to abstract from Morris Cohen's major work, *Reason and Nature*, the passage in which Cohen identified his point of view:

I am a rationalist in believing that reason is a genuine and significant phase of nature; but I am an irrationalist in insisting that nature contains more than reason. I am a mystic in holding that all words point to a realm of being deeper and wider than the words themselves. But I reject as vicious obscurantism all efforts to describe the indescribable.

Here is the credo of a man whose life was filled with benevolent thought and benevolent action. Not enough attention, it seems to us, has been given to the idea that basic philosophy is the place to begin those arduous labors which must be pursued if the world is ever to enjoy the peace for which most men, both rich and poor, so intensely long.



REVIEW

REPORT ON INDONESIA

TWENTY years ago, there was no Indonesia. There was only the Dutch East Indies, a sprawling mass of islands—some 3,000 in all—where rubber grows, where the people of Bali get their pictures painted by Covarrubias, and where a listless eternity rules over the lazy, glamorous, unchangeable East. Today, those islands are a new nation with a population of 80,000,000 people rapidly being welded into unity.

But who knows anything about Indonesia? Cameron Hawley, writer of "Indonesia: The Fabulous Experiment," an article in *Harper's* for August, starts out by saying that "millions of otherwise well-informed persons are apparently unaware that Indonesia is a major nation, the sixth largest on earth, exceeded in population by only Russia, China, India, the United States, and possibly Japan."

Concerning any discussion of Indonesia, this Department had better begin with an honest confession. Our fixed policy, whenever the subject of Indonesia comes up, is to go to the bookshelf and single out Robert Payne's *Revolt of Asia*, a book which, although published in 1947, contains more useful information on this new country than any other reference work we know of. Payne's book is more than a source of information; it is also an infallible generator of enthusiasm for the Indonesian leaders and people. While several other countries are dealt with in *The Revolt of Asia*, Indonesia gets the most attention, probably because Payne himself felt that what he was able to write about these people contained more of authentic discovery than accounts of countries like India and China. So, if you read Hawley's article in *Harper's*—and you should—be sure to get Payne's book for solid background and the historical antecedents of what the Indonesians are shown to be accomplishing at the present time.

The Indonesians have one great obstacle to overcome—illiteracy. In 1945, when the Japanese were leaving in defeat and the Dutch were trying to return, more than 90 per cent of adult Indonesians could neither read nor write. (Mr. Hawley holds the Dutch responsible for regarding illiteracy as a safeguard against "trouble." He reports that "During the last decade of Dutch colonial control, only about two hundred Indonesians a year were allowed by the Dutch to progress as far as graduation from high school.") To read in *Harper's* about the Indonesian current program of adult education in reading and writing is almost a thrilling experience. On Hawley's first night in the country, he overheard a thirty-eight-year-old "school boy" struggling out loud with a primer: "There was an all but indescribable joy of victory in those liquid brown eyes as he demonstrated to me that he could actually *read*—and after completing only half of the six months' course." Then the student added something which may bring raised eyebrows from politically bored American readers: "Before long I will be able to read what the ministers in the government say. Then I will know for myself what is right and what is

wrong." But before judging the simple faith of this man, the bored Americans should read what some of those government ministers have to say.

The most articulate of the Indonesian leaders is doubtless Soetan Shjarir, a young patriot who spent eight years of his life in Dutch concentration camps during the time before Indonesian independence. It was Shjarir who formulated the conceptual meaning of the Indonesian Revolution, and who talked to the people over the radio in 1946, interpreting the role of Indonesian Nationalism. In one of these addresses, he traced the difficulties of Oriental peoples in trying to assimilate the impact of Western invasion and culture. The Asiatics, he said, respecting and envying the power of the Western nations, tried to copy the methods of the West without understanding their development. They were, according to Shjarir's analysis, still "Easterners," attempting to cope with problems created by the West, yet not understanding the true nature of those problems. The solution was found, Shjarir declared, only by "a widening of the mental horizon, by which the struggle could be fought against the background of the universality of the values." We are indebted to Payne's book for the following extract from Shjarir's radio talk to the Indonesian people:

In penetrating deeper and being made more receptive to the overwhelming riches of the Western mind, they [Asians who learned to understand Western culture and its manifestations] regained their inner certainty. They allowed themselves to be influenced by those elements of culture which could be fertilizing and developing, to form free and harmonious personalities. And at the same time they realized that it also belonged to Western tasks to conform to standards of truth, beauty, and goodness. These were the same ideas that had already been proclaimed by the prophetic figures of the East, though differently formulated and applied.

The West itself has also been in a process of revision and purification for a long time. Among themselves they knew that the application of knowledge and technique could have fatal results, if at the same time moral standards were allowed to be overthrown. The chaotic condition existing among the world powers with all that it implies (annihilation by the atomic bomb) arises from man's self-doubt and from the lack of inner moral resistance.

The essential task of the modern man today, whether he comes from the East or the West, is to rescue himself from this abyss by endeavoring to fix again his known position, and re-establish his absolute presence, his destination in the cosmos. In all this he must be led by standards of truth, beauty, and kindness, which form together the components of human dignity.

The universal values are today no monopoly of the East, nor of the West; these are the tasks of fundamental man, and are valid whether he considers he is obeying the orders of the Almighty, or whether he considers man as a being finding his center in himself.

In all this we keenly experience and are fully aware that the realization and maintenance of human dignity are not possible within the space of servility and submission of one

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"BUILT-IN DANGER"

ONE of the features of B. J. Cutler's survey of capital punishment in the New York *Herald Tribune* (see lead article) is a discussion of the world trend away from condemning men to death. While the defenders of execution usually claim that the abolition of capital punishment will lead to an epidemic of murders, in no case has this happened after repeal. The Netherlands, which gave up capital punishment in 1870, has not been especially plagued by capital crimes. The homicide rate in Sweden has steadily dropped since 1921, when that country abandoned the death penalty.

This experience has been repeated in the United States, where the states which employ the death penalty have higher homicide rates than the states which have repealed capital punishment. Varying economic and social conditions, however, confuse the issue in some respects, since states with large industrial centers tend to have more crime than is common in primarily agricultural or rural communities. Six states—Maine, Rhode Island, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, and North Dakota—have dropped the death penalty (Michigan and North Dakota have retained it for treason, but have never applied it). Wisconsin has not had an execution for a hundred years. The last application of the death penalty in Wisconsin was in 1853, which brought so great a demonstration of popular protest that the capital punishment law was repealed in 1854. Commenting recently on this record, Governor Kohler said:

It is perfectly safe to say that Wisconsin believes definitely that capital punishment not only offers no advantages or safeguards to the public, but it is definitely poor public policy. Individuals who act compulsively and aggressively do not consider the penalty before acting, and capital punishment does not deter capital crime.

The absence of capital punishment does not, in my opinion, hinder in any way good law enforcement. The criminal statistics gathered by the Federal Bureau of Investigation year after year reveal that Wisconsin has consistently enjoyed one of the lowest homicide rates in the nation.

Opponents of the death penalty point out that those who claim that execution is a deterrent to crime ignore the fact that authorities once believed that public executions and slow and painful ways of inflicting death by torture were necessary to prevent crime. They ask: Why not go back to these methods? This question, however, as Cutler observes, is largely rhetorical, raised mainly to annoy the supporters of the death penalty, "because both sides know that the public would not stand for such a deterrent program."

Cutler also notes that elements of inconsistency in public

attitude work against the effectiveness of the death penalty as a deterrent. While no state has permanently dropped capital punishment since 1915, and although six states reinstated execution during the crime wave which followed demobilization after World War I, the number of executions has been consistently less and less, indicating unwillingness on the part of juries to recommend death sentences. Critics of the extreme penalty suggest that, today, deterrence through execution may be at a minimum simply because it is so seldom applied. They argue that effectiveness of capital punishment as a deterrent depends upon "the knowledge among potential murderers that they face a good chance of execution." But it is estimated that the present disinclination of juries to inflict the death penalty creates odds of 100-to-1 against a murderer suffering execution. When executions become frequent, the public objects, as happened in New York state, so that, as Prof. Thorsten Sellin observes, the very continuance of capital punishment as a supposed deterrent seems "to depend on its rarity and, therefore, its effectiveness."

The occasion for this review of capital punishment in a large metropolitan newspaper like the *Herald Tribune* was doubtless the recent case of Paul A. Pfeffer, who was convicted of murder in the second degree and sentenced to from twenty years to life. His record was against him. He was a parole violator with four earlier arrests. Except for a little luck, he would have been convicted of first-degree murder and sent to the electric chair by June 5.

Police obtained a confession from Pfeffer three days after a brutal murder, and while he swore that his confession had been extracted by third-degree methods, no one believed him. But Pfeffer, it now develops, may have been entirely innocent, for on June 5 of this year John Francis Roche confessed to a series of killings, among them that of the alleged victim of the murder for which Pfeffer was convicted. Pfeffer's attorneys won the right to lie detector tests for Pfeffer, and after three days of testing the indications of his innocence were such that he was assured a new trial. Cutler comments: "The Pfeffer-Roche case dramatically illustrated to New York the built-in danger of its capital punishment law: the ever-present possibility of executing an innocent man."

Some are even asking the question of what ought to be done with Roche, so that the time may eventually come when a more enlightened society will consider the implications of executing *any* man.

MANAS is a journal of independent inquiry, concerned with study of the principles which move world society on its present course, and with search for contrasting principles — that may be capable of supporting intelligent idealism under the conditions of life in the twentieth century. **MANAS** is concerned, therefore, with philosophy and with practical psychology, in as direct and simple a manner as its editors and contributors can write. The word "manas" comes from a common root suggesting "man" or "the thinker." Editorial articles are unsigned, since **MANAS** wishes to present ideas and viewpoints, not personalities.

The Publishers

CHILDREN ... and Ourselves

By courtesy of the colorful monthly, *Arizona Highways* (July), we have encountered one of the most interesting "new school" stories of the past few years. "Verde Valley," as this school is named, appears to be a wonderful example of what can still be done by way of pioneering by someone who combines intelligence, integrity and a vision.

Hamilton Warren, founder and present director of Verde Valley, is a man whose convictions on the subject of education led him to action rather than to debate. A graduate of Harvard in anthropology, and also a graduate of the Harvard School of Business Administration, Warren served as a member of the U.S. State Department, and later became administrative assistant to the chief of the overseas branch of the Office of War Information during World War II. This latter experience gave him an intimate sense of the complete futility of war and diplomacy as means of settling international problems. Finally, like Arthur Morgan, Warren became certain that "The Long Road" of education was the only road promising any hope of arriving at the portals of peace and mutual understanding. So he decided to do what he could, as one individual, in training young people to see that "human knowledge was basically a whole, of which the economic, social, geographical, historical, scientific, cultural and national aspects were simply parts. They must especially be people who had tolerance and understanding for the rights and views of others, based upon a firm foundation of conviction of what is good and right."

To quote further from Ed Peplow, who reviews the history of Verde Valley for *Arizona Highways*:

He [Warren] felt that the great emphasis in modern education upon early specialization precludes the possibility of such broad cultural perspective. By and large, schools, he felt, were producing workmen, artisans and specialists rather than leaders. Thus he resolved to spend his life and what part of his personal fortune might be necessary to build a school to educate the leaders he felt were so sorely needed. Verde Valley is the result.

It is a non-profit organization (which means that any profit the school might make must be turned back to be used for the further development of the school) incorporated under the laws of the state of Arizona. Its over-all direction is subject to the action of a board of trustees of nationally known educators and cultural leaders. However, the actual administration is left to the Academic Committee and to the executive director and his assistant.

An interesting feature of Warren's program is his effective combination of liberal arts education with the best ingredients of "progressivism." Student participation was organic at Verde Valley from the beginning, even though the practical duties assumed by all the members of this constructive community were considered as merely adjuncts to the acquiring of general cultural and philosophical understanding—through fulfilling rigorous liberal arts requirements. Peplow writes:

This student participation in every phase of the physical work around the school is an integral part of the Verde Valley program. It began when the first students arrived in October 1948. That date is a special one in Warren's memory. While

he had, of course, spent considerable time and effort during the first year on publicity and upon trying to enroll students, his first energies had necessarily gone into the building program and into signing up a proper faculty. After all, it would be pretty hard to get a parent to send a child to a school which had no buildings and no faculty.

Thus, in late August of 1948, Warren found himself with three large buildings, six exceptionally qualified faculty members, but no students. Opening date was pushed back a month, to October, and he and the faculty buckled down to the problem of getting students. Within a month they had signed up the first year's enrollment of 16. Those 16 still are remembered as the pioneers of Verde Valley. They arrived to find the nucleus of the present campus set out among piles of gravel, building blocks, lumber piles, half-made roads and the tents in which the Warrens had lived and cooked during that first year. They pitched in, carried blocks, mixed cement, swung paint brushes, drove tractors, sawed, hammered and dug. Verde Valley became very much their school.

While students today are prevented by the heavy academic schedule from participating to such an extent in the work of the still growing school, they are required to carry a full share of the "business of living." They wait on tables; wash dishes; do the housecleaning; tend the gardens; care for the horses; clean the stable; help maintain the trucks, tractors and cars of the school; collect and dispose of the trash and garbage; paint the buildings; help maintain the heaters; and pitch in on the work of building and maintaining the roads on the campus. However, none of this work program is allowed to interfere with the primary objective of Verde Valley. From the very first interview between the school's representative and a prospective parent or student, the emphasis is upon the academic.

Along with holding to intercultural and interracial ideals, Warren also succeeded in doing something practical about the problem of economic equality. While the regular tuition at Verde Valley comes to \$1985 a year—an all-inclusive fee covering room, board, supplies, textbooks, accident insurance, etc.—"a liberal fund for tuition aid has been maintained." Among the present enrollment of 62 boys and girls are a number whose parents cannot meet the total expense. This fund enables the latter to matriculate along with others more economically fortunate, yet the fund is administered so that none of the students or faculty knows which students required assistance. All members of the community, furthermore, share the work alike, regardless of their financial status, so that here some of the best elements of socialism are combined with democracy. Student government is in the form of a student council, composed of five members, elected by the equal vote of every member of the school—students, faculty, and staff. The council "has almost full disciplinary powers in all realms except the academic, health, financial and administrative. It can recommend probation, suspension and dismissal of any student and has used this power. Supplementing the council are dorm councils which have local powers in each dorm. Every week there is a student meeting attended by the full community and at which there is free and open discussion of any problem affecting any part of the school."

Another impressive feature of Verde Valley is the attitude shown towards religion and religions. According to Peplow:

Religion at Verde Valley is an entirely personal matter. Lectures are given in the field of comparative religion in order to introduce the student to the religious beliefs of peoples all over the world and throughout history. Each week there are religious discussion meetings, led either by a member of the faculty or by a qualified outsider. Free expression of opinions
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RELIGION

SCIENCE

EDUCATION

FRONTIERS

New Dimensions for Scientific Thinkers

PERUSAL of recent issues of *The American Scholar* and *Psychiatry* deepens the conviction that a continual revaluation of the "materialistic"—or "realistic"—perspective is a hallmark of this third quarter of the century. Discussing "Poetic Creativity" in the current *Psychiatry*, Robert M. Wilson demonstrates that the modern analyst is becoming more and more capable of appreciating and utilizing what used to be called "pure" philosophic language. The passages we have selected are clearly a far cry from the past tendency of academic psychologists to deal with "the artist" as a rather unsound emotional type. Just as the psychotherapists have lately spoken in favor of intelligent *maladjustment* to a neurotic society, so is Dr. Wilson persuaded that the "creative person" who is able to stand apart from social conventions has a better chance of penetrating to the core of living experience than the purely analytical intellect. He writes:

Language becomes for us all the mirror of the world; most of us use it with a fairly low level of alertness, but it is the peculiar virtue of the literary artist to employ words with a maximum awareness of their special qualities. Some have suggested that the cultural pressure of linguistic convention forces upon the child an acceptance of stereotyped ways of seeing and thinking, and that adherence to a conformist view of things is therefore built in by the inexorable demands of a common language. According to this view, the creative person would be one who in fact rejects the conventions of word usage in favor of a more perceptive concentration upon exact meanings, one who can retain the capacity for seeing as the child supposedly sees, in complete freshness and wonder. There is considerable support for this notion in the emphasis placed by artists upon the maintenance of curiosity, of the gift of wonder.

Strange, is it not, to find "intuition" discussed thus sympathetically by a representative of "scientific psychology"? Dr. Wilson goes on to express the viewpoint which is central to Macneile Dixon's *Human Situation*:

If one point in the creative process can be singled out as of prepotent significance, it is the moment of vision, when an original formulation occurs to the artist. Without this realization of possibilities for expression, the experimental fund and the technical mastery have no theme upon which to play. The realization may be called insight, inspiration, intuitive flash: it is the feeling of immediate knowledge of connections, of the sight of truth or coherence or pure symmetry. The content of experience becomes meaningful in a selected manner, with such impact that it cries for expression. This occasion cannot be planned or rationally ordered; it seems to happen to the person without his conscious effort, at once a surprise and a fulfillment. The happening is related again and again, by scientists as well as artists, and always with a tone of mystery. It is in the best sense a discovery; because the discovering has been going on for some time in the unconscious, it sometimes appears as a rediscovery of a vision once known and then forgotten. This is the probable basis for Wordsworth's feeling that new insight is a recollection of the divine wisdom of the child.

Perhaps most frequently, the moment of insight embraces a combination of elements of experience. If the segments have previously appeared, they have been unrelated and disparate, but now they suddenly attain an intimate emotional-logical relatedness. Metaphor is a typical example, if the metaphor be of wide and deep implication.

Yet the intuition need not be in the form of connections; it may be a distillation, the intense grasp of essential properties of an object or action. In this guise, it approximates a Platonic recognition of first qualities at the core. For this moment an image or event stands naked before the creative perceiver, revealed in its intensity of being and isness.

Again, in another paragraph, this analysis of "poetic creativity" is made to support the dignity and worth of philosophic introspection:

The self is a part of the environment of the developing person. Perception of the self by the self forms a significant component of experience. It is a truism that the creative artist uses himself—that is, employs his own experience, seen as object, in his expressive effort. The picture of the self which the person infers and constructs in his introspective maneuvers is the artist's prime source of material and knowledge. It is the basic insurance that his motivational insights will be accurate, and is the first testing-ground for the validity of his conceptions. This is so despite the fact that the person may introspect in "error" as gauged by certain objective standards; what he sees within is true for him and is his last resort as creator. The meaning of great art work for large numbers of people, and through many generations, attests that the single creator's self-examination is not infinitely distorted. If it were, there would be no communication by means of art and no standards of esthetic value and relevance. As science in the last analysis rests upon the consensus of informed observers, so verbal art survives through an implicit agreement in the hearts and minds of men that what the artist has said is "true"—at least for them. The poet explores the self, and thus the self that is tapped must be a richer, fuller whole in him than in other men if his work is to be maximally pertinent.

In *The American Scholar* (Summer, 1954) George W. Corner, Director of the Department of Embryology at Carnegie Institute, proposes that the doctrine of materialism needs constant modification and restatement:

This enormous, overwhelming, almost inconceivable complexity of the human structure and mental function forces us, if we are to be materialists, into materialism of a new sort. When La Mettrie said that man is a machine, a machine to him meant something like a clock or the primitive Newcomen steam engine. He must have realized that the human machine is more complicated than that, but still it was to him figuratively a thing of cogs and levers. If, however, I say that man is a machine, I have to think of an apparatus much more complicated than the biggest electronic computing machine, and also much less stable, much more sensitive than any piece of man-made automatic hardware. The difference between old and new concepts of the living machine is so great, so fundamental that twentieth-century scientific materialism is bound to be very different from that of the past. My variety of it, you may say when I finish, is not materialism at all.

In other words, Dr. Corner believes that "we have just about reached a truce in the old quarrel between vitalism and mechanism." Mechanical experiments with the neural

REVIEW—(Continued)

people to another; for there is no human dignity without freedom to determine one's fate.

Hence our fierce resistance against all that hampers and hinders our freedom, and our strong will, and hence our determination to form the new society we have in view.

So we resist, not primarily because we were driven by hatred, resentment, or aversion to foreigners, but because we consider freedom as a *conditio sine qua non*, without which it is impossible to form ourselves and our community. Freedom is the condition for human dignity. But freedom and human dignity are ideas that remain sterile if they do not find concretion and application in the society in which we live.

This was in 1946. Today, in 1954, an American traveler, driving down the main street of the mid-Java metropolis of Djokjakarta, saw ahead what looked like a street riot of the sort he had been warned against by Westerners who fear the barbarous ways of the illiterate Indonesians. Getting closer, he found that it "turned out to be a mob of teen-agers struggling to get into an empty store building to see an exhibition of books!"

Indonesia, Mr. Hawley notes, has a very poor press. Disappointed colonials write about the decline of the beautiful cities of the Dutch Indies into "shabby shambles." But Hawley found housing developments that "would not seem too out of place on Long Island or in Los Angeles." The reports of "degeneration" and "disorder" are simply not true. In Djakarta, formerly called Batavia, "Everywhere there was cleanliness and order. . . . Heavy auto and cycle traffic, all under well policed control, flowed up and down modern streets lined with mile after mile of substantial and well cared for homes."

On the other hand, Indonesia is no placid place. It bubbles with the energy of people who have recovered from their first rather bizarre "freedom jag," and are settling down to face the realities of a new-born democratic com-

mechanisms of animals reveal that, even here, in the least sensitive organisms of matter, "imponderables" and "incomprehensibles" have a great deal to do with the final results of experiment. The Liddell studies at Cornell, in which "painless but unceasingly recurrent electric shocks" were administered to goats, demonstrated that the emotional trauma experienced by one twin kid was entirely escaped by his alter ego—simply because the mother was present at all times in the latter case. If the "presence of its mother had done something inside the little animal that kept its nerves from jangling," and if this "something" is unmeasurable, it is easy to conclude that no process of mechanistic conditioning can determine the structure of human personality. "Individuals will still be unpredictable," and, despite the increase in prestige of the statistical sciences and knowledge of human management in the economic and social levels, "human history will not cease being made nor poetry to be written."

All this seems another clear indication of the gradual transformation of thought suggested by such books as Joseph Wood Krutch's *Measure of Man*. Krutch's restatement of the case for Free Will and Spontaneity, as opposed to scientifically-blasted conditioning, was not, we think, a voice in the wilderness, but rather the articulation of a mood which is rapidly spreading among scientific thinkers themselves.

munity. First of all there is the literacy campaign:

In my own round-the-world observations, I have found nothing to match it—a gigantic effort to teach adults to read and write that is turning illiterates into literates at the claimed rate of two million a year. The claim may be on the high side, and anyone can argue about the location of a boundary line that a man has to cross to become literate, but you can scarcely walk down any city street or wander any village road without seeing and hearing irrefutable evidence of the results.

What do the Indonesians think about America? They admire the governmental system of America above all others. Indonesian leaders are able to quote at length from American history. "We stand," they say, "where you stood in 1787, four years after achieving your own independence. . . ." Naturally enough, much of their enthusiasm for America is directed toward the period of the Founding Fathers, but Hawley was again and again told by Indonesians how much they appreciated the "friendship" evidenced by an American steamship line which brought to its New York headquarters a group of young Indonesian men and gave them a short course in American shipping methods.

While it is claimed that 90 per cent of the Indonesians are Moslem, Hawley thinks it unlikely that the people will ever submit to "the Koran-modeled straight-jacket of a completely theocratic state." Actually, Islam in Indonesia is much diluted by other ancestral faiths. At Borobodur, the site of a famous Buddhist temple, he saw Hindu offerings made to figures of the Buddha by people who thought of themselves as Moslems, and a woman emerging from a Roman Catholic Church with rosary in hand denied that she was Catholic—she was a good Moslem, she said, like the rest of the Javanese, but she preferred the Roman services!

Hawley looks for little communist success in Indonesia, despite the existence of an openly accepted movement. It may be recalled that the Indonesians suppressed an attempted communist revolution themselves, without assistance from the Western powers. It is American rather than communist achievement which is the accepted guide to national planning by the Indonesian leaders. When Hawley proposed this to the Secretary-General of the Indonesian Department of Information, he received the following reply:

"You're quite right," he said. "Admitted or not, your form of government is the model toward which we are striving. But there's one thing that has been bothering me a great deal of late."

I noticed then that he was idly turning the pages of an American news magazine that he picked up from the arm of my chair.

"Is this the inevitable accompaniment of democracy?" he asked softly. "Must we look forward to this if we continue to follow your example?"

The headlines in the magazine were not especially encouraging to a man who wanted to hold the United States of America up as an ideal to be followed. Graft, malfeasance, Congressional investigations trimming away traditional freedoms, labor riots, brutal murders—all in a single issue of the magazine. However—

"It's still the best form of government the world has ever known," he said stubbornly, but that faintly questioning undertone in his voice made me wish . . . that the walls of the glass house into which the United States has moved since it assumed a position of world leadership weren't so transparent.

Mr. Hawley leaves his readers with the memory of an old waiter spelling out, in a moment of leisure, the words of a pamphlet. Its title was, *What Freedom Means*.

THE WORTH OF HUMAN LIFE

(Continued)

nation have tried the mandatory death law. All of them repealed it and now give some degree of discretion to judges or juries. Six of these states abolished capital punishment outright.

The stringent New York law almost caused a breakdown in justice in the 1930's, when executions ran from seven to twenty-one a year. The revolt by jurors was especially evident in cases of felony murder—killings in connection with crimes like robbery and burglary. . . . Despite the most damning evidence, juries began to acquit lesser members of gangs involved in felony cases rather than sentence them to the electric chair.

A practicing New York attorney confirms this view: "I have tried murder cases and they are easier to defend than ordinary robbery cases because of the reluctance of juries to convict when they know the penalty is the electric chair." He adds, however, that "this feeling does not apply to racketeers or notorious persons; then juries feel free to convict."

Books like Edwin Borchard's *Convicting the Innocent* and Erle Stanley Gardner's *The Court of Last Resort* gather evidence to show the defects of human justice, recalling the statement of the Marquis de Lafayette, the friend of American independence and of justice: "I shall ask for the abolition of the penalty of death until I have the infallibility of human judgment demonstrated to me."

Cases of the miscarriage of justice may help to create a state of mind which will support repeal of capital punishment laws, but the question of whether execution is a constructive measure, even after guilt has been fixed with absolute certainty, will nevertheless remain. Does the fact that a condemned man is unquestionably guilty make his execution any the less barbarous and brutal? A former prosecuting attorney of Brooklyn, New York, Leo Healy, who has since conducted the defense in more than two hundred murder cases, expresses the view that "the theory of punishment is so ingrained in our society that we have not stopped to give it the thought it deserves." *Why*, in other words, should it be thought "right" to legally kill the one who has taken the life of another?

To kill in cold blood—this is the definition of murder, which, with rape and kidnaping and espionage are the crimes which bring the death penalty—is a terrible thing. That it should happen at all is an indictment of the moral atmosphere of the community where it occurs. But to meet this failure with legal killing by the state only confirms the mood in which murders occur. The death penalty, moreover, is like the unconditional surrender declaration made by the allies in World War II. It operates as a kind of official bravado which may drive desperate men to kill again and again to avoid being caught. When Mr. Healy

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says, "I don't believe anybody ever committed murder who was in his right senses," he might have included capital punishment as a species of murder, for what sense can there be in imposing upon the social community the horrible spectacle of a man, held in hopeless captivity, waiting to be led to the execution chamber?

The human societies of the present need above all to gain respect for life, and this includes the lives which have been distorted by the experience of and participation in crime. Human life is precious, not because death is not inevitable, but because so long as a man lives he has opportunity for choice, for change for the better. It should be the duty of the state to extend that opportunity, under proper safeguards, for as long a period as possible, instead of adopting a policy which amounts to practical denial of the worth of human existence.

CHILDREN—(Continued)

is encouraged, and no effort is made either to urge beliefs upon anyone or to ridicule the beliefs anyone might hold. Students who request it are taken to churches of their choice in Sedona, Clarkdale, Cottonwood or Flagstaff.

Naturally this phase of the school's policy has been the subject of some discussion pro and con. Some parents have sent their children to Verde Valley more readily because, as they have expressed it, no religion is thrust upon the students. Others have felt that it is a legitimate responsibility of a school to accept and declare a religious belief which it will attempt to sell the student. Still others have felt that an atmosphere of extreme freedom of belief tends to generate a spirit of disbelief and perhaps of ridicule of some of the widely accepted but less intellectually stylish beliefs; that too much questioning can beget a religious vacuum.

However, it can be said that in this phase, as in all others of Verde Valley life, there is a sincere respect for personal integrity.

At present, Verde Valley has placed each of its thirty-six graduates in the university of his or her choice, the academic attainments of the school being recognized as extraordinarily high, qualifying its students for institutes of technology as well as for Princeton, Stanford, Radcliffe, Mills, Antioch, etc.

In presenting the story of Verde Valley—a school which is plainly one of the finest of preparatory schools available—we take some delight in noting that Warren's success nicely demonstrates that worth-while achievements in education do not necessarily need Big Institutions with big financial backing.

